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Intelligence Memorandum

The 29th UN General Assembly

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116

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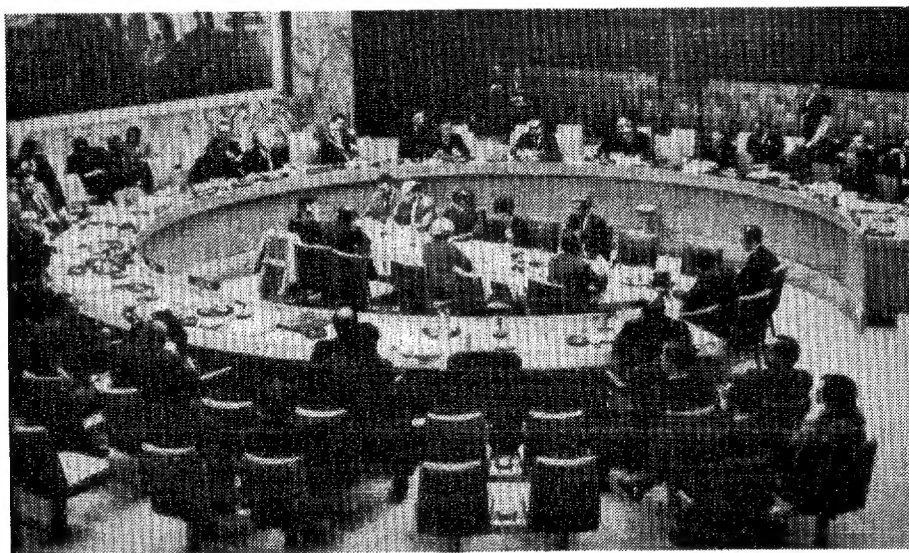
September 23, 1974

The 29th UN General Assembly

Summary

The 29th UN General Assembly will be dominated by efforts of the lesser developed countries to entrench—as basic UN policies—the new economic order and plan of action that came out of the Special Session last spring. In keeping with the movement of recent years toward politicization of economic and social issues by their debate on the assembly floor, the lesser developed countries will use the assembly—as their most accessible forum—to highlight their frustration at the monopoly over resources and power enjoyed by the developed countries. At the same time, they will attempt to wrest for themselves a greater share of that wealth.

In addition to this heightened emphasis on economic issues, discussion in the session will focus on the consequences of a number of events that jolted the UN community this year: the Indian nuclear test, continued instability on Cyprus, and the results of UN-sponsored conferences on the Law of the Sea and Population. These will be listed on the agenda along with the traditional credentials issues, the Korean problem, and humanitarian concerns. The usual desultory debate and inattention that most UN issues engender will probably mark the session this year as well. But the influence of Algeria's forceful foreign minister, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, as president may be sufficient to arrest further diminution of the assembly's prestige as a body responsive at least to the aspirations of its less fortunate majority, if not to the desires of its most powerful backers.



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Inter-Sessional Developments

Atmospherics

The 29th General Assembly convened last week in a climate heavy with the disappointment of many of its members. These states say that the United Nations has failed to influence international relations in line with the objectives expressed in its charter: "to practice tolerance and live together in peace...to unite...to maintain international peace and security, and to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples." Unilateral national actions have frustrated these aims too often for the charter now to engender much confidence in the success of international efforts backed only by the declining prestige of the UN or its secretary general.

The major powers have come in for their share of the blame because of their alleged neglect of the UN Security Council as the locus of discussion and resolution of the major challenges to international order and security. This neglect leads to the contention that problems are dumped in the UN's lap only after all other efforts to solve them have failed. The UN remains, for the majority of its members, the last resort when serious negotiations are called for.

Events in Cyprus this summer confirmed for many members the UN's inability to influence international events. There appear to have been few delusions on the part of most countries that the UN could have prevented or, once initiated, have halted the hostilities. But the UN was still expected to fulfill a valuable humanitarian role through its peacekeeping forces on the island. The vehemence of the international response to what was widely considered to have been the failure of the peacekeeping forces to fulfill even this minimum role may derive from apprehension that once the UN forfeits social and humanitarian responsibilities, the rationale for its existence has ceased.

Aggravating Economic Developments

That the UN is held in such low esteem has not, however, robbed it of its importance as a political forum, particularly for the developing countries—the so-called Group of 77—who now number over 100. For these countries, the UN system, and particularly the General Assembly, offers the only platform available from which they can present their aspirations, air their dissatisfactions, and be assured that they will at least be heard. The assembly's importance has been revitalized by expanding the scope of its responsibilities beyond those strictly political initiatives at which the UN has

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so consistently failed. Social and economic issues that were previously discussed only in the specialized agencies are increasingly being debated on the assembly floor.

The most obvious example of this movement toward politicizing economic issues was the special session on raw materials and energy held last April. It was initiated by the Algerians primarily to prevent international opinion from focusing on the energy issue alone—and on the great profits realized by the oil exporters at the expense of other less developed countries as well as of the developed countries. The session, in four weeks of speeches and debates, heard speaker after speaker present the consequences of the world economic situation on his country's economy. The Program of Action and the Declaration of the New Economic Order that were adopted at the conclusion of the session represented a major victory for the less developed countries in focusing international attention on the seriousness of their financial situations and in pointing up the interdependence of economic forces. These countries have defended these documents tenaciously in every UN meeting since the special session, and have shown their determination to see the so-called new economic order accepted as a blueprint for action by the developed countries. This use of the assembly to highlight their grievances has more appeal to them than strictly technical debates, and the politicization of economic and social issues can be expected to have a significant impact on the current session of the UNGA.

Major Influences on this Session

The period since the conclusion of the last assembly has also witnessed other events with serious implications—and opportunities—for the UN's future: the Indian nuclear test of last May, the Cyprus crisis, and the recently concluded UN-sponsored conferences on Law of the Sea and Population. Should this General Assembly fail to translate the international concern over these issues into at least a climate beneficial to their resolution, the UN may find its prestige so weakened in the opinion of its member states that it would lose even much of its function as a forum for debate and discussion.

The Indian nuclear explosion—the first breach of the proliferation barrier since the Chinese nuclear test of 1964—shook the international community from its complacency with existing nuclear non-proliferation policies. India's ability to explode a device without the help of the major powers, and despite the controls placed on Indian nuclear facilities by international and bilateral obligations, has inspired some other potential nuclear states to consider a similar course. At a minimum, the changed climate has reinforced the reluctance of a number of countries to ratify the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the keystone of the major powers' nuclear policy.

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By maintaining public pressure on India and other near nuclear states to affirm and abide by non-proliferation goals, the UN could emphasize the serious concern with which its member states regard such actions, which have an extremely destabilizing effect on the peace and security of all states.

The continued instability on Cyprus has led to calls from a number of quarters for greater UN involvement in solving the problem. The Soviet Union has been attempting to broaden its own role on Cyprus by pushing for the dispatch of a Security Council mission—which would include an East European representative—to investigate and report on conditions on the island. The nonaligned group has also been urged, primarily by Yugoslavia, to play a more decisive role to ensure that Cyprus retains its territorial integrity and nonaligned status.

At the same time, Turkish opposition to an assembly discussion of Cyprus is having some success in undercutting this Yugoslav initiative. The Turks have been actively lobbying with the nonaligned Moslem states. The Algerians—whose foreign minister will play a decisive role as president of this assembly session—have said they will try to keep the issue from becoming the subject of divisive debate.

Although most countries appear to be resigned to some assembly discussion of Cyprus, the countries directly involved will ultimately set the tenor of the discussion. Archbishop Makarios supported the earlier Soviet call for a large international conference under UN auspices to deal with Cyprus, and he has recently repeated his call for the “internationalization” of the question. He will probably use any assembly debate primarily to bolster his own position as the legitimate head of the Cypriot government

The Greeks and Greek Cypriots are considering inscribing a separate agenda item on Cyprus, in the hope of pressing the Turks to move promptly on a negotiated settlement.

All sides realize that probably little constructive debate would result from throwing the question into the assembly, but the members can do little to prevent it from being used as a propaganda forum. Such a debate could, however, reflect a genuine international concern that might influence the concerned parties to resume negotiations. Positive assembly responses to an appeal for the UN coordinated refugee relief program could also help to remove the serious obstacle that the refugees pose to a final settlement.

Although the Law of the Sea and the World Population conferences have been criticized as typically inconclusive UN debates, both have

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registered achievements in areas that are new to international decision-making. The Law of the Sea Conference, which ended in Caracas on August 29, did not produce a new treaty for the use and exploitation of the seas. The ten weeks of negotiations did, however, educate the representatives of the 148 nations that attended on the points on which compromise may eventually be possible. Moreover, by pointing out the chaos of any alternative arrangements, the talks may have reinforced the determination of the participants eventually to conclude a Law of the Sea treaty.

The World Population Conference, on the other hand, served a function merely by forcing the world community to consider the consequences of current population policies. The World Population Plan of Action that was finally adopted was a significant watering down of the original targets, due chiefly to objections by developing and Communist countries to what they considered as potential infringements of national sovereignty. Nevertheless, a good start was made toward bringing home to the less-developed countries the effects of continued unrestrained population growth on their own development, and to the developed countries the realization that population policies cannot be considered apolitically.

A Look Ahead

Economic issues—and basic differences in how the developing industrialized, and Communist countries approach them—will be at the center of much of the General Assembly debate. The developing states will focus on the disparities between industrialized and developing countries, but their views may differ according to their relative levels of poverty, regional affiliation, or political orientation. Most will nevertheless do all that is possible to maintain a united front. Their success in this will influence their alignment on the non-economic issues as well.

Although the industrialized states will want to show sympathy for the problems of the developing world, they are also interested in limiting their own expenditures and avoiding long-term commitments. The Soviet Union and the East European Communist countries will verbally support most of the developing countries' stands, but will also look for ways to limit their own involvement. China, which continues to try to expand its influence in the Third World, will use the development issues to launch its familiar attacks on the super powers, especially the USSR. China's excessive rhetoric and lack of concrete action last spring during the special session of the General Assembly on raw materials and development did little, however, to strengthen Peking's image among the developing states.

For most developing states, the General Assembly is the only international forum in which they feel they have any power. By voting as a unit,

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they hold an automatic majority and can force adoption of any resolution. In practice, the group has sought—whenever possible, and often heavily-handedly—to have resolutions adopted by consensus motions, which mask any objections to points they favor.

This tactic was evident at the special session of the General Assembly last spring. The developing states placed great store on adoption by consensus of a declaration of principles and an action program for a “new world economic order.” Resolutions that endorsed, among other things, producer cartels and unrestricted nationalization of resources were opposed by the US and other industrialized nations. Although a vote was never taken, a “consensus” resolution was accepted. During the 57th session of the UN Economic and Social Council in July, the Group of 77 then tried to establish recognition of the action program and the declaration of principles by prefacing various resolutions with references to the earlier declarations and citing the consensus obtained earlier.

Along with the US, most of the other industrialized states demanded a vote and opposed points that specifically mentioned the declaration and program of action. Although the resolutions were approved, the actions of the developed countries broke the pattern of acceptance of imposed consensus resolutions and angered many delegates from the developing countries who had come to take acceptance of “consensus” for granted.

The developing states will certainly raise the program of action and the declaration of principles again at the coming General Assembly. The Group of 77 will continue to endeavor to entrench the resolutions as basic UN policies. If the developed states continue to oppose this drive, enforced consensus could become a test of solidarity for the developing countries. Should resource-poor developing states begin to feel that substantial aid cannot be obtained without full, willing cooperation from the industrialized nations, however, they may begin to oppose the rigid stands advocated by other developing states. Nevertheless, even the poorest states would probably resist overt attempts to split them from the developing-country bloc. Solidarity is so important to such countries that even Chile, which is treated as a pariah by most members of the Group of 77, feels it must stick to the developing-country line whenever possible.

The Economic Issues

The interests of the developing and industrialized countries will conflict on a number of specific points. While both sides will seek to avoid open confrontation, the world economic situation will make it as difficult for the developing states to be less demanding as it will be for the industrialized

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states to be more forthcoming. Certain issues that will be discussed at the General Assembly are so fundamental to the relations between and among developed and developing states that they transcend the particular forums in which they are presently being discussed and the resolutions to which they have been attached.

Sovereignty Over Resources and Nationalization

The developing states have insisted—both at the General Assembly special session and in the UN Conference on Trade and Development deliberations on the draft Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States—that each state has an absolute right to control its own natural resources and wealth as it sees fit, and that it enjoys a concomitant right of nationalization. Although the developed states agree in principle, they insist that nationalization must be governed by international law and that compensation must be prompt, complete, and subject to negotiation. Some compromise solutions were advanced, but even if agreement is reached on wording for the Economic Rights and Duties Charter, the explosive issue of nationalization will not be completely resolved.

Multinational Corporations

Multinational corporations are a favorite whipping boy of the developing world and are invariably dragged into debates on development, transfer of technology, and nationalization. Some of the developing countries will no doubt want to attack multinationals once again as neo-colonialist tools of capitalist imperialism. They will reject the developed countries' argument that curbs on multinationals will only limit private foreign investment in developing economies and hence retard development. Nationalist tendencies will, in any case, prompt the developing states to push for increased domestic control of foreign firms on their soil.

In June, a controversial UN study by a group of "eminent persons" took a negative view of multinationals and recommended restrictions on their activities. A special UN committee is now considering establishing permanent machinery in the UN to develop a "strategy" on multinationals. If the issue is not raised directly on the floor of the General Assembly, it will be forwarded to the General Assembly from the concurrent meeting of the Economic and Social Council.

Transfer of Technology

Many developing states argue that liberal, if not free, access to advanced technological processes is vital for their economic development. They want

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this principle incorporated into UN aid programs. The industrialized states recognize the importance of technological advances in the development plans of these states, but they are not willing to codify the transfer of technology. This is because most processes are, in fact, proprietary to individual firms, and the industrialized states feel that all countries, developing or otherwise, should deal with the particular firm that possesses the relevant technology. Most private firms have been loathe to part with industrial secrets—particularly at concessional terms—because they fear competition once the developing states acquire the necessary skills. The developing countries' reactions to what they see as a tight-fisted attitude have also been important in shaping their negative attitudes toward multinational corporations.

Aid to the Most Seriously Affected

The special session last spring agreed in principle to establish an aid program for those developing states "most seriously affected" by oil and other commodity price increases. The aid plan would provide emergency relief and development assistance to some 20 or 30 countries—most with an annual per capita GNP of less than \$200. An ad hoc committee was established to manage the fund, to be made up of contributions from industrialized and oil-producing states. Backers of the program hoped to raise \$4 billion, but donations have been slow because most industrialized nations are feeling the pinch of inflation and because they are making their pledges contingent on substantial sums from Arab oil producers. These have not and do not seem likely to materialize.

For the most part both the industrialized states and the Arab oil producers prefer to contribute aid bilaterally rather than submit their funds to the control of a UN committee.

Should the UN program nevertheless get under way, perhaps as a bookkeeping operation for a series of bilateral loans and grants, the developed states will still want to ensure that the aid be used as a means of relieving balance-of-payments problems and not as long-term project assistance. If rhetoric does not materialize into hard cash or food aid, however, the resentment of these poorest of the poor certainly may impel them to unite in disruptive tactics at the UN. Although few in number, the most seriously affected states include several influential members such as India and Pakistan, who might be able to sway a majority of the Group of 77 into supporting their cause.

The Nuclear Question

The questions of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation will this year spark more than the desultory debate that has marked assembly

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consideration of these issues in recent years. A number of proliferation and arms-related events—notably the Indian nuclear test in May—have jolted the international community during the past year. The resulting recognition of a need for more effective non-proliferation controls or, at a minimum, some form of security guarantees for non-nuclear states, has fostered the inscription of a number of disarmament-related items on the agenda this year.

Despite the agreement in principle for a US-USSR threshold test ban treaty, those UN-related disarmament forums in which the US and USSR exert the major influence—the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, which both powers co-chair, and the working group considering the convening of a World Disarmament Conference, a USSR initiative—will submit reports for the General Assembly's consideration reflecting another year of little or no progress toward negotiating multilateral disarmament pacts. This will provide ample ammunition for such countries as China, which has long condemned the domination of the super powers in this area.

Heightened international concern over the implications of continued proliferation has focused attention on the security requirements of many nations, but the oil embargo last winter and the subsequent high price of fuel have added a new dimension to the nuclear proliferation debate. For many developing countries, the use of nuclear energy sources has assumed a critical importance that effectively tempers their concern over nuclear proliferation. These countries will probably push at the General Assembly—as well as at the board meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency this month—for increased technical assistance and financial grants from the developed countries.

The two major non-proliferation items on this year's agenda resulted directly from the Indian test and are patterned after an earlier arms-control measure successfully negotiated within the UN forum: the Latin American Nuclear Free Zone, established by the 1967 Treaty of Tlatelolco. Alarmed at the implications of the Indian explosion for its own security, Pakistan has called for the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in South Asia. The Pakistanis are seeking to strengthen the security of non-nuclear states against nuclear threat or blackmail—if possible by obtaining some form of assurances from the permanent Security Council members—and to sustain world concern over proliferation in the wake of the Indian test. By pushing for a nuclear-free zone for South Asia, the Pakistanis may also be seeking to embarrass the Indians. They may hope to expose what they consider to be India's insincere justification of its test as a peaceful nuclear explosion. The Treaty of Tlatelolco permits treaty parties to conduct peaceful nuclear explosions provided their peaceful purpose is verified under international safeguards. India, the Pakistanis feel, would not be able to justify non-accession to such a treaty.

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The Shah of Iran, reviving a proposal he first introduced in 1968, has also called for the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East. Unlike Pakistan, Iran is a party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and thus prohibited from acquiring nuclear weapons. The Shah's motivation in promoting such an initiative is not only to shore up the treaty's faltering controls, but also to point up the growing risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East.

The Egyptians have joined the Iranians as co-sponsors of the item, but their support is linked more to propaganda than to a strong commitment to non-proliferation. The Egyptians reportedly feel that by co-sponsoring the resolution they can emphasize the difficulty or impossibility of obtaining a ban on nuclear weapons in the Middle East as long as Israel refuses to ratify the treaty.

The delineation of the area to be covered in the Egyptian-Iranian proposal has deliberately been left vague, with the only stipulation being that such an agreement must include Israel. While Iran favors a broad definition of the Middle East, political antagonisms and alliances in the area are likely to complicate any geographic definition. Turkey feels, for instance, that it cannot consent to being part of a nuclear free zone because of its NATO commitments; the Arab states, moreover, refuse to negotiate directly with Israel. The sponsors of the resolutions probably do not expect the General Assembly to do more than endorse their initiatives and request that reports be submitted next year.

The only other major new initiative is a Soviet-proposed ban on environmental warfare. In a letter to Secretary General Waldheim requesting the item's inscription, Moscow called for an international convention that would outlaw modifying the weather for military purposes. The resolution has engendered little corridor interest and has been described by one delegate as the annual Soviet "showcase" proposal.

The committee studying the resolution on the Indian Ocean peace zone will submit a report on Great Power presence in the area that was strongly criticized when it was originally published by the committee this summer. Because it has since been revised, it will probably result in less criticism of the Great Power presence, particularly in light of India's own nuclear explosion.

The Middle East

The General Assembly will face the Middle East problem again this year. Last year, discussion was deferred because of concurrent Security

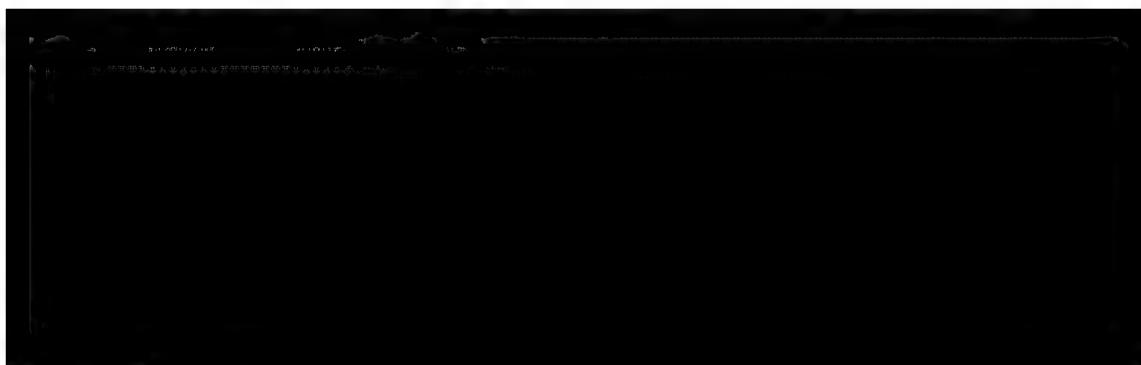
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Council deliberations. Even though the Middle East has been entered as a separate agenda item, the Arabs apparently have not yet decided on a resolution or on their parliamentary maneuvers to gain its passage. Decisions may not be reached until the Arab summit conference meets in October. The Arabs are now concentrating their planning for the assembly on those resolutions that would afford the Palestinian issue the greatest exposure while embarrassing and isolating Israel.

Actually, the inclusion of a separate agenda item on the Palestinian problem is likely to be the major diplomatic offensive of the Arab countries this year. The Palestinian Liberation Organization, backed by the Arab League, wants the problem debated as a political rather than as a humanitarian issue centering on aid to the refugees, to which they feel debate has been limited since the 1950s. To better present its cause to the world body, the PLO is also considering a request for observer status and for recognition as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

Discussion of the Palestinian issue will also provide the Arab countries with another occasion to reiterate their long-standing opposition to contributing to the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. The agency is already in serious financial difficulty. It faces a \$39-million deficit in 1975, and a major curtailment of its educational and relief efforts was only averted at the last moment this summer by generous donations from the US, Japan, and some European countries. Growing opposition by traditional supporters to footing the bill has made little impression on the wealthy Arab countries. Their argument—that the Palestinian refugees were created by the West and should be supported by the West—will undoubtedly be presented again, preventing any progress in placing finances on a sound basis.



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Peacekeeping

The attempt to formulate general peacekeeping guidelines has been a recurrent concern of each General Assembly since the Committee of

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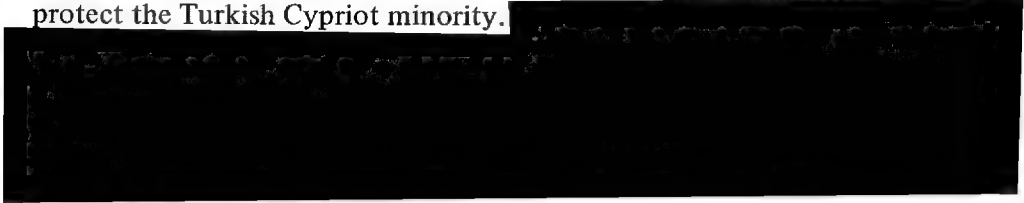
Secretary General Waldheim meets with Acting Cypriot President Clerides.

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33—charged with drawing up such guidelines—was established in 1965. A working group has plodded along for years; because of differences between the US and USSR over the issues of peacekeeping financing and authority for conducting such operations, the group has no concrete achievements to show for its efforts. Events this summer involving the peacekeeping forces on Cyprus, however, have generated new interest and have refocused attention on the need to formulate more explicit peacekeeping guidelines than those under which UN forces presently operate. Many members feel that the legal justification for peacekeeping forces as well as their guarantee of safety, must be rooted in generally accepted principles and not in an ad hoc consensus among the five permanent Security Council powers. At a minimum, those countries contributing troops to the various UN peacekeeping operations may now demand a clearer and more specific formulation of how far their forces can go, either in defending themselves or in carrying out their mandated responsibilities.

UN units are currently stationed on Cyprus, along the Suez Canal, between Israel and Syria, and as observers in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, and Israel. The original, predominantly West European, make-up of these forces has been broadened in recent years to include greater representation by Africans, Asians, and Latin Americans.

That the UN can do only what its member nations, and particularly the major powers, want it to do was dramatically illustrated in the Security Council discussions regarding the duties and fate of the UN troops on Cyprus. When the crisis broke out in July, this force was at its lowest strength—2,300 men—since its establishment in 1964. Confronted by 40,000 Turkish troops on the one hand and 12,000 Greek troops on the other, and armed primarily with rifles, the UN troops were theoretically charged with the overwhelming responsibility of protecting the Greek and Turkish Cypriots trapped in each other's territory. Despite the protestations of its commander that the UN force was not an occupation army and had neither the power nor authority to impose itself between the warring parties, both sides felt that their Cypriot brethren were being purposely abandoned by the UN troops. The Turks, in particular, vehemently attacked the peacekeeping forces' inaction, claiming that racial antagonism was behind their failure to protect the Turkish Cypriot minority.



In addition to the split between the US and USSR, the differences in conceptions of peacekeeping objectives—particularly between the

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less-developed and the nonaligned, on one hand, and the major powers, primarily the US and West European, on the other—will be most evident when the General Assembly considers financing, the most basic of peacekeeping problems. Secretary General Waldheim has for months been trying to devise a formula for paying or reimbursing those countries now supplying troops to the UN's Middle East contingents. Once an acceptable solution has been reached for that peacekeeping operation, the Secretariat's formula could be applied to other UN operations.

Waldheim is committed to the concept of "equal pay for equal work" for soldiers of the UN forces. In line with this, he has proposed that each country be paid an identical flat rate for each soldier serving. The plan does allow for a slight bonus in the payment of technical or highly skilled personnel, but does not reimburse countries for the equipment that they supply their troops.

The proposed flat-rate figures, which have ranged from \$500 per man per month to \$350 with an extra \$150 for technical personnel, are considered too low by both developing and Western states. The developing countries see participation in peacekeeping forces as a chance to enhance both their treasuries and their national prestige. The Western countries, on the other hand, argue that their real costs per man are much higher than \$500 (the Swedes cite \$900) and that a lower flat rate would penalize them. This, in turn, could become a factor causing them to reconsider their commitment to UN peacekeeping operations in general.

Human Rights

In line with the shift toward greater emphasis on economic and social questions at this year's assembly session, the issue of human rights will probably attract greater attention than in recent years. The aftermath of the Chilean coup last September, documented reports of human rights violations in a number of UN member countries, and domestic pressures in some UN states to show more progress in dealing with these issues have all led to the introduction of important new human rights initiatives this year. Other resolutions considered—but usually buried—by earlier assembly sessions have also been revived.

The Australian government, for example, has requested the inscription of an item on diplomatic asylum. Motivated in particular by what they consider the inadequacy of existing conventions in alleviating the plight of Chilean coup victims, the Australians have requested that the General Assembly draw up a new convention codifying the principles governing the right of asylum. Attempts to standardize such principles have been a recurrent concern in international law and have already been addressed by various

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UN bodies. The Australians feel, however, that consideration has been limited to granting physical safety. Canberra argues that now is the time to broaden the debate and to address the consequences of granting diplomatic asylum to those alleged to have committed "political" offenses.

A number of countries are opposed to the Australian proposal, arguing that new standards could seriously limit territorial sovereignty or could have repercussions on internal security. If, despite these objections, the Australians persist in pushing for assembly consideration, a clash similar to the one during the debate last year over the Convention on the Protection of Diplomats is likely. The crux of the matter lies in defining acts that are "political." The Africans and Arabs made clear last year that they will seek to define the right of asylum to include those engaged in armed struggle against colonialism or apartheid, as well as to many acts commonly regarded by the international community as "terrorist." Most countries have little taste for according humanitarian protection to such persons, and this may preclude the formulation of any guidelines at the session this year.

Assembly discussion of items on torture and the elimination of religious discrimination serves little more than propaganda purposes for many countries and, even if UN resolutions on the subjects are ultimately adopted, such recommendations have no effect in moderating national policies. The West Europeans and the US, nevertheless, remain strongly behind efforts to improve UN machinery for safeguarding human rights, but even with broad support within the assembly, the consistent Communist opposition to discussing problems of religious tolerance stalls any positive action. A report setting forth alternative approaches for strengthening the UN's role in these matters has already been requested for submission to the next assembly session. The Communist states may attempt to deflect some of the expected criticism of their internal policies by focusing on torture and human rights violations in other countries. A recent report by a subcommission of the UN's Human Rights Commission levied accusations at five countries, ranging from widespread torture in Brazil to political executions in Chile and Uganda. While the report of the subcommission itself will not be submitted formally to the Human Rights Commission until early in 1975, the leaked results of its findings could be effectively exploited to trade charges between alleged offenders and stall general consideration of human rights issues at the assembly.

Membership

One of the first actions of the 29th General Assembly will be the admission of three new members: Guinea-Bissau, Grenada, and Bangladesh. Their admission will bring membership to 138 and bolster the UN's claim to

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universal representation—a claim that may be weakened if expected challenges to the credentials of South Africa and the Khmer government are successful.

Although the General Assembly has voted for the past three sessions to reject South Africa's credentials, this ruling has been interpreted as having only an admonitory effect. This year, the African group has stated its intention to go beyond a ritual condemnation to secure the actual expulsion of South Africa, either by a direct General Assembly vote or by a resolution asking the Security Council to recommend such action. In the latter case, South Africa would be suspended from participating in the assembly pending a decision of the Security Council.

The Africans' decision to press for South Africa's expulsion is probably related to the fact that Abdelaziz Bouteflika, the Algerian foreign minister, now holds the presidency of the assembly. While it is unlikely that Bouteflika himself would precipitate the credentials challenge through questionable constitutional rulings, the Africans are probably confident that he would do little to impede their own attempts to challenge South Africa's right to representation. The argument that South Africa's continued UN membership sustains its exposure to international public opinion and thus has some beneficial effect appears to have little chance of moderating the African call for expulsion.

Following the close vote last year on a procedural motion to defer a Khmer credentials challenge to the session this year, Cambodia's Southeast Asian allies have been closely coordinating their efforts to draw up a resolution that would effectively defer the question once again.

Cambodia and its allies are considering a proposal that would set up a UN-sponsored fact-finding mission—made up of representatives from three governments that recognize neither the Khmer nor the Sihanouk regimes—to investigate conditions in Cambodia. This report would be submitted to the 30th UNGA in 1975 and would allow UN members the opportunity to evaluate both sides' claims to national sovereignty. In proposing this fact-finding mission, Cambodia and its allies are confident that the Sihanouk insurgents would not allow the mission to investigate conditions within their territory or to assess the degree of control they exercise. Phnom Penh believes this attitude would compare unfavorably with its own more forthcoming and cooperative response, and would result in a more favorable assessment by a number of countries of Phnom Penh's viability as a government and its right to retain the UN seat.

The North Koreans remain opposed to admitting two Korean states to the UN, so the stalemate on this membership issue will continue at this

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session. On the broader Korean problem, however, the consensus reached last year to postpone discussion of the question appears unlikely to be repeated this year. The item proposed by North Korea for inscription on the agenda this year specifically addresses the issue of the UN Command—as it did last year—but reflects a new, two-phase approach for achieving Pyongyang's objectives. The North Koreans feel that if they can gain support in the assembly for abolishing the 1950 resolution that established the UN troops in South Korea, it will be easier to secure their second objective—the withdrawal of US troops from South Korea, whose legal basis for remaining would thus have been undercut.

The UN Command, which enforces the Korean armistice as an agent of the Security Council, can be disbanded only by the Security Council, however, so any General Assembly resolution would have no legal impact. Moreover, the presence of US forces in South Korea is authorized by a bilateral treaty of 1954, which would continue in effect even if the command were abolished.

The European Community will press its claim for observer status at the UN. Under the EC treaties, community officials increasingly speak for the member states on trade and aid issues over which the Community has jurisdiction. The EC already has observer status in several of the UN's specialized agencies, and its drive to secure a position in the General Assembly reaffirms the community's desire to play a leading role in the world body.

The annual General Assembly debate over the Portuguese territories is expected to be much less strident than in previous years, now that the new Portuguese government is moving to grant independence to its former colonies. The Africans' satisfaction with the Portuguese actions may not mellow their attitudes on the Rhodesian and Namibian questions. While no definite African strategy for raising these questions has yet emerged, the Africans have consistently regarded both issues as important, and they can be expected to condemn the continued lack of progress in implementing relevant UN resolutions regarding self-determination for the territories' black inhabitants.

Budgetary and Administrative

In recent years, the UN system has been called upon to provide an increasing number of services for its member states. Through its 12 specialized agencies, the UN annually dispenses about \$1.4 billion in technical-assistance grants, equipment and training outlays, and other economic, social, and human rights activities, primarily to the developing countries. The

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demands that such assistance grants be augmented every year—either through contributions by the developed states or from the regular UN budget—often seem to be made without regard to the realities of UN financing. For many of the developing-country representatives, their yearly General Assembly speeches have become the major vehicle for presenting “pet” projects or grand international initiatives to enhance both their personal prestige and their nation’s image. Many of these initiatives may well be worth the UN’s attention, but the growing tendency to propose new programs that frequently duplicate existing functions and ignore financial implications is placing the UN in an untenable financial position.

Last year, the General Assembly approved the first biennial UN program budget for 1974-75, amounting to \$270.2 million a year. Early projections already indicate that this budget could be increased at least \$55 million by this assembly. As much as \$45 million of the increase would go only toward covering adjustments for inflation and currency changes. In addition to these current operating expenses, the UN faces an accumulated deficit of \$90 million, stemming largely from unpaid assessments for earlier UN peacekeeping operations in the Middle East and the Congo.

The General Assembly’s budgetary committee must consider a number of new proposals that would add to the already significant deficit. The International Civil Service Board is expected to recommend a salary increase of some six percent for professional UN staff members. If approved, this would place UN salaries significantly above comparable US civil service levels.

Another administrative and budgetary proposal with potentially far-reaching effects is the request by the German-speaking countries (East and West Germany and Austria) that certain key UN documents be translated into German. While the sponsoring countries have decided, at least for now, not to request that German be made an official and working language of the UN, they will be influenced by the General Assembly’s action last year in according such status to Arabic. The Germans and Austrians, however, are willing to assume the estimated \$600,000 annual cost of translating the documents for the first three years.

The implications of the German request assume alarming proportions when considered in the context of current demands on the UN system. The cost of translating and distributing UN documents is now running at about \$250 a page, and the UN’s strained administrative services are being called upon to provide documentation for an ever-increasing number of committee and conference meetings. One recent memo from the UN’s Department of Conference Services reported that for a single committee’s final report, the

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UN was required to reproduce and distribute 13.5 tons of documents, most of which had already circulated as working papers.

Consideration of the UN's budgetary situation obviously will not be one of the brighter spots of the session this year. Certain Communist states, moreover, have already expressed their intentions to table a number of resolutions whose sole purpose seems to be to politicize an already complicated issue. Led by Cuba, these states want a resolution blaming the developed—i.e., Western—states for the effects of inflation and currency instability on the UN budget and demanding compensation for the less developed.

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ANNEX

Many of the issues which will face the delegates to the General Assembly have been discussed earlier this year in more specialized forums and will certainly be raised again in the coming year. The following limited list of such meetings indicates both the intensity and the extent of discussion of these subjects.

World Population Conference—Met in August and focused on population policy issues as part of the World Population Year. Clash between developed and developing states brought adoption of a considerably diluted World Population Plan of Action.

Multilateral Trade Negotiations—These long-awaited talks may begin late this fall. The developing states will look for ways to exploit them to push for preferential trade treatment.

Law of the Sea—Met all summer in Caracas and reconvenes in March 1975 to consider the proposed 200-mile economic zone, ownership of seabed and marine resources, and laws of international waters. The developed and developing states followed expected alignments, although maritime issues did cause a few strange bedfellows.

World Food Conference—Delegates from almost all the UN countries will assemble in Rome in early November to investigate the world food situation, hoping to find ways to increase production and to improve distribution of existing world food supplies. It may seek to establish a permanent world food authority.

International Atomic Energy Agency—The agency's Board of Governors and its eighth General Conference will meet as the General Assembly convenes. Discussion will probably focus on ways to expand the agency's technical assistance in providing peaceful nuclear services, primarily to the developing countries. Increased concern about the implications of further proliferation is also expected to lead to debate over safeguards provisions on developing country power reactors.

UN Conference on Trade and Development—The conference's Trade and Development Board will close its annual meeting in Geneva as the General Assembly opens. Delegates from the industrialized and developing states argued over familiar issues and voiced support for a successful conclusion to the negotiations for the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

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The developing states may now transfer their lobbying for ratification of a code of conduct on world shipping practices, which would benefit developing states, to the General Assembly.

Economic and Social Council of the UN—The council will resume its 57th session, which began in July, in New York in November. It will assign working groups to detail plans on aid issues and will be the center of activity on the study of multinational corporations.

World Bank/International Monetary Fund Group—Meets in late September to discuss global economic conditions and to consider formal establishment of a joint ministerial committee to study the transfer of real resources to developing states.

World Energy Conference—A UN-sponsored energy conference has been under consideration since last winter, when it was proposed by the French. A call for such a session would have some chance of success, particularly if prices of oil continue to increase or supplies decrease.

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